dramatic force, and yet we never felt anything incongruous in the method of such a deliverance to so small and intimate a gathering. Rhetorically it was a triumph. As soon as he finished, Baron Sonnino turned round to me and said : " That is the finest speech I ever heard." But whilst it was a brilliant display of M. Briand's powers, it was also a revelation of his defects.

There was no attempt to deal with the practical difficulties or to indicate how they were to be over-come. There were two other characteristic touches to follow. We were to dine at the French Embassy that evening. The speech delayed us, and M. Barrere had to postpone the hour of our repast. When M. Briand finished, the tenseness of the face relaxed, the glow in the eye disappeared, and he turned round to us with a smile, and said : " And now for the Embassy ! " The following morning Albert Thomas sought to renew the discussion and bring it to some practical point, but his eloquent chief cut him short. He wanted no further debate on the topic. He had come there to deliver a speech and not to obtain a decision. His speech had been delivered ; it was a triumph : there was nothing more to be done.

However, I thought it necessary to give practical reasons why we could not comply with the French demand, and I said that " if eloquence would carry two divisions to Salonika, M. Briand's speech at the

conclusion of the previous evening's Conference would have accomplished the task. Unfortunately, however, ships were needed and these we had not got." I read a telegram received that morning from the Quartermaster-General of the War Office to the effect that since the previous Thursday the traffic